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WHAT EVERY AMERICAN SHOULD KNOW ABOUT INDO-CHINA

THE EDITORS

THE H-BOMB TERROR IN JAPAN

TOKUE SHIBATA

AMERICA MUST BE TOLD

ANEURIN BEVAN

BIG BUSINESS AND FASCISM

ORIGINAL DOCUMENT

EDITORS . . . LEO HUBERMAN . . . PAUL M. SWEEZY

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NOTES FROM THE EDITORS

The truth, properly marshaled and presented, is a force in its own right, and we believe that this has never been more clearly so than in the case of Indo-China. We have tried in this month's Review of the Month, "What Every American Should Know about Indo-China," to give a straightforward and reasonably comprehensive account of the background of the present situation in that crucially important part of the world. In order to get these facts before as many people as possible in as short a time as possible, we are publishing "What Every American Should Know about Indo-China" simultaneously as a pamphlet. We would like (1) to advertise this pamphlet and (2) to send it to all United States Congressmen and to key individuals and libraries all over the country. The extent to which we can carry out this program depends on whether you are willing to provide the necessary financing. We ask you to read "What Every American Should Know about Indo-China" and then decide whether you think it is important to give it as wide a circulation as possible. When you have made up your mind, order as many copies as you can distribute, and send as much extra money as you

(*continued on inside back cover*)

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WHAT EVERY AMERICAN SHOULD KNOW ABOUT INDO-CHINA

The war in Indo-China really began nearly a hundred years ago. It was in 1858, according to the standard sources, that France began the long process of imposing colonial rule on the country, and colonial rule has always implied more or less continuous warfare between rulers and subjects.

Sometimes the struggle is little noticed in the outside world, but it is rarely absent. Take, for example, Laos which is now part of Indo-China and over which the French established a "protectorate" toward the end of the 19th century. In French textbooks, the Laotians are described as the very model of a lazy and contented native people who are supposed to need and appreciate the benevolent rule of civilized nations. And yet, according to a recent study, "the history of these fifty years [of French rule] shows a long series of popular uprisings, tirelessly conducted by this 'amiably indolent' people who are 'satisfied with their lot.' "*[1]

Sometimes, on the other hand, the struggle reaches the level of full-scale warfare, as it has during the last eight years in Indo-China—though not for the first time. The following description of warfare in Tonkin (northern Vietnam) might almost be from yesterday's paper. Actually, it is from the *Encyclopedia Britannica's* account of events which transpired in the years 1884-1891:

> The people of Tongking began to rise. The occupation of Tongking became a prolonged warfare, in which 25,000 French, compelled to guard innumerable posts, had to oppose an intangible enemy, appearing by night, vanishing by day, and practising brigandage rather than war. The military expenditure, met neither by commerce, which had become impossible, nor taxation, which the Annamese could not pay nor the French receive, resulted in heavy deficits. Than-quan, Hon-Koi, Lao-Kay, Pak-Lun and Kao-Bang were occupied, but the troops were driven back to the Delta and almost invested in the towns. [Successive

* *References will be found at the end of this article.*

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> Residents General] were all powerless to deal with the uninterrupted "bush-fighting" and the augmentation of the deficit for no sooner was the latter covered by grants from the mother country than it began to grow again. The rebels held almost all the delta provinces, their capitals excepted, and from Hanoi itself the governor general could see the smoke of burning villages at the very gates of his capital. (Omissions are not indicated.)[2]

That time the fighting lasted some six years; this time it is already in its eighth year. It has been going on so long, in fact, that there is a danger we shall forget how it started and perhaps even fall for Mr. Dulles' fairy stories about the gallant French and their allies, the Associated States of Indo-China, fighting an uphill battle against the wicked aggression of "Communist imperialism." If you live among madmen you may sooner or later begin to accept their delusions as real. The only way to save yourself is to stop every so often and have a look at the sober facts of the real world.

Indo-China in World War II

When France fell in 1940, the colonial regime in Indo-China decided to collaborate with Japan just as the Vichy government decided to collaborate with Hitler. In both countries a patriotic resistance movement grew up which assisted the allied cause and in turn received material and military aid, particularly from the American Office of Strategic Services. In Indo-China, the resistance was called the Vietminh, which is an abbreviation of the Vietnamese for "League for the Independence of Vietnam." It was led from the beginning by Ho Chi Minh, a veteran revolutionary who had been in the thick of the fight for Vietnamese independence before and during World War I and who had subsequently founded the Vietnamese Communist Party. By the end of World War II, the Vietminh had gained complete mastery over a number of provinces in northeast Indo-China and thus had established a solid territorial base, much as the Chinese Communists had in China.

As the war approached an end in Europe, the French in Indo-China, seeing the handwriting on the wall, began to plan to throw out the Japanese and change sides again. But the Japanese beat them to the draw and in March, 1945, locked up all French military and civilian personnel, proclaiming Vietnam to be an "independent" state under the Annamite Emperor Bao Dai.

When the Japanese surrendered in August, the French were in jail and the resistance movement, amidst great popular enthusiasm, assumed power without even a struggle. Bao Dai, far from putting up a fight, quietly abdicated his throne and (under his civilian name of Vinh Tuy) accepted a position as "Supreme Councillor" to the Ho Chi Minh government. Early in September, a new state, the

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Democratic Republic of Vietnam, declared its independence. Four months later, the first and only free general elections in Vietnamese history gave a crushing majority to Ho Chi Minh and his colleagues: in Hanoi their slate won 98.4 percent of the votes.*

The end of World War II, so it seemed, marked the end of French rule in Indo-China and the birth of a new Vietnamese state.

The Trouble Begins

But things were not so simple as they first appeared to be: they rarely are. The French had no intention of staying out of Indo-China, and it soon turned out that they had powerful friends to help them return.

At the Potsdam Conference in July, 1945, it had been decided (on whose motion?) that the responsibility for disarming the Japanese in Indo-China should rest on the Chinese in the region above the 16th parallel and on the British in the south. The Chinese army that came down from the north was actually not a Kuomintang army; it was a regional Yunnanese army which Chiang Kai-shek was anxious to get out of the way in order to facilitate the consolidation of his own control over Yunnan, a province that up to then had remained relatively autonomous. The Yunnanese showed no particular interest in the internal affairs of Vietnam and on the whole helped to consolidate the power of the Ho Chi Minh government.

It was very different in the south. There, the British General Gracey was in charge, and it was his policy to restore imperialist rule and no nonsense. To quote the *New Statesman & Nation* (April 17, 1954): "General Gracey not only refused to deal with Ho Chi Minh's government, claiming—absurdly—that it was a Japanese puppet; but he armed French troops, freed from Japanese internment, disarmed the Viet Minh, declared martial law, and made use of Japanese troops to maintain law and order." The newly elected Labor government in London, to its everlasting shame let it be said, promptly put the stamp of approval on this policy by signing an agreement with France turning the area over to French control. General Leclerc, named commander of an expeditionary force by de Gaulle, brought in fresh troops and proceeded to "pacify" the area.

Vietnam was now effectively split into two parts. The seeds of the future war had been sown—not, it should be emphasized, by the Russians (who were nowhere near Indo-China) nor by the Chinese (who respected the right of the Vietnamese to manage their own

* By this time, the French had seized control in the south so that the voting in that region had to be secret. So far as we know, however, no one disputes the fact that the result of the election as a whole was an overwhelming victory for the Vietminh regime.

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affairs) nor by the Americans (whose policy in Asia still reflected Roosevelt's strong distaste for colonialism of the kind practised by the French) but by the British. It is one of those ironies of which history seems to be so fond that the British, who subsequently were to have the good sense to withdraw from India and Burma, were responsible for shoehorning the unregenerate Dutch and French back into Indonesia and Indo-China.

Dirty Work

While restoring their hold on the south, the French began to maneuver to get back into the north as well. The methods they used were guile, deceit, and ultimately brute force.

The immediate French problem was twofold, to get the Chinese to agree to evacuate the country and to get the Democratic Republic of Vietnam to permit French forces to enter the north (particularly the Red River delta with its capital city of Hanoi and its seaport of Haiphong). This problem was solved by simultaneous negotiations in Chungking and Hanoi. The French High Commissioner, Admiral Thierry d'Argenlieu, went to Chungking, while his deputy M. Sainteny went to Hanoi. The key to the success of both negotiations was what seemed at the time to be an enormous concession by the French to the Vietnamese: they recognized the new Republic. Here is the agreement, signed by Sainteny and Ho Chi Minh on March 6, 1946:

> 1. The government of France recognizes the Republic of Vietnam as a free state *having its government and its parliament, its army and its finances,* forming part of the Indo-Chinese federation and of the French Union. Regarding the reunion of the three "Ky" [that is Cochin China in the south, Annam in the center, and Tonkin in the north], the French government agrees to be bound by the decisions of the peoples consulted by referendum. [Emphasis added.]
>
> 2. The government of Vietnam agrees to receive in a friendly fashion the French army when, in accordance with international agreements, it comes to relieve the Chinese troops.
>
> 3. The foregoing stipulations will become effective immediately. Directly after the exchange of signatures, each of the high contracting parties will take all necessary measures to bring about a cease fire on the battlefields, to maintain their troops in their respective positions, and to create a climate favorable to the immediate opening of friendly and frank negotiations. These negotiations will relate particularly to:
>
> a) diplomatic relations of Vietnam with foreign states;
> b) the future status of Indo-China;
> c) French economic and cultural interests in Vietnam.[3]

It should be remembered that the "French Union" had not yet been defined at this time, but the italicized clause in the first para-

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graph—"having its government and its parliament, its army and its finances"—proves conclusively that Ho Chi Minh was promised a wide and genuine degree of independence, approaching if not equalling that enjoyed by the British Dominions.

Having signed the accord, Ho embarked for France to negotiate the matters detailed in the third paragraph. On March 18, Leclerc's army entered Hanoi.

Immediately, the French regime in Indo-China, under the direction of Admiral d'Argenlieu, began to violate and undermine the agreement—deliberately and without the slightest doubt for the purpose of reducing all of Indo-China once again to the status of a colony. On June 1, 1946, a puppet regime was set up in Cochin China in evident violation of the promise to abide by the results of a popular referendum. French troops were sent into areas under Vietnamese control, despite the promise to maintain the military *status quo*. And during the summer, d'Argenlieu convoked a conference to which he invited representatives of Cochin China, Laos, and Cambodia but *not* representatives of the legally recognized Vietnamese government. Both the pattern and the purpose were obvious to everyone.

It has been said that these high-handed acts of the French colonial authorities were taken behind the back, and even in direct contravention to the orders, of the government in Paris (which at that time, it will be recalled, included both Communists and Socialists). No doubt they were taken behind the backs of some (perhaps most) of the members of the government, but it is certain that Paris must share the guilt of its emissaries in Indo-China. What happened prior to and at the Fontainebleau conference between Ho Chi Minh and the French government during the summer of 1946 proves that beyond any possibility of doubt. *The French deliberately planned to torpedo the conference with a view to undermining and ultimately overthrowing the Ho Chi Minh government.*

Here is the testimony of Professor Paul Rivet who was asked to serve as a member of the French delegation to the Fontainebleau conference:

> The French delegation was presided over by M. Max André, who was my colleague on the General Council of the Seine and is now [1949] a Senator for the Seine. I have the greatest esteem for this affable and courteous colleague. . . . Nevertheless, it is certain that the choice of M. Max André could not please the Vietnamese who were not ignorant of his connections with the Banque franco-chinoise and hence with the Banque de l'Indochine.
>
> . . . M. Max André invited all the French delegates to his house on July 5, 1946, for the purpose of getting together before the first official Franco-Vietnamese conference scheduled for the

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next day. I accepted this invitation. I was surprised not to find among the delegates anyone who I knew had a profound knowledge of Indo-China. . . . I asked at the opening of the meeting for the text of the accords of March 6th which should serve as a basis for the discussions and which I hoped to be able to study that evening. My question seemed to be inopportune, and I was informed that these texts would eventually be communicated to me. On the other hand, there was much insistence on the necessity for strict discipline in the delegation and for strict observance of decisions arrived at by the majority of its members. From this moment, I kept silent. I listened to the proposals exchanged among the delegates and, on taking leave of M. Max André, I announced that I was resigning.

That same evening, I communicated this decision to M. Marius Moutet [Minister for Overseas Territories] in a long letter in which I said that I did not intend to be a dupe nor an accomplice nor a hostage, and in which I denounced the grand-style maneuver which was to be pursued for many months with a rare tenacity: to lead the Fontainebleau conference into an impasse, to profit from the discredit which the failure of the negotiations was supposed to cast upon the negotiators, particularly on Ho Chi Minh, and to propose (and if need be impose) the Bao Dai solution while depriving Tonkin of rice from Cochin China and thus provoking a famine.

M. Marius Moutet certainly did not believe in this machiavellian plot. He did not acknowledge receipt of my letter. Desiring to publish it, I asked him for it. He states that he left it in the archives of the ministry, and a search made there has yielded no result. Mystery![4]

Or rather, no mystery at all. M. Moutet may have been as stupid as Professor Rivet paints him. But *somebody* in Paris knew the score, and it was manifestly the same score known to Admiral d'Argenlieu in Saigon.

How the War Began

When Ho Chi Minh left France in September 1946 he signed a so-called *modus vivendi* with Moutet, but naturally enough it failed to settle any of the crucial issues and Ho must have known that the French were determined to destroy his regime. If he had any doubts on the subject, they were soon to be dispelled.

Even while the Fontainebleau conference was in session, the French in Indo-China had launched the operation which they counted upon to deliver the *coup de grâce* to the Republic. The year 1945 had been one of famine in Tonkin: at least a million persons, and possibly twice that number, died of starvation. Under the circumstances, Ho's government was forced to suspend collection of land taxes, and for the time being it was left with only one effective source

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of revenue, customs collected at the port of Haiphong. (An interesting sidelight on French policy: despite the enormous profits made by the Banque de l'Indochine and a handful of other French monopolies operating in Indo-China, absolutely no taxes were collected from these companies. The Republic, of course, was precluded from imposing such taxes until the appropriate agreements had been negotiated with France.) During the summer of 1946 the French set out to substitute French for Vietnamese control of the customs in Haiphong. Success, obviously, would enable them to suffocate the Republic financially and, if need be, literally to starve it to death. All this, of course, despite the March 6th agreement recognizing the Republic as a "free state . . . having . . . its finances."

Beginning July 26 when "the French maritime authorities notified the Chinese authorities that henceforth Chinese ships touching Haiphong will be subject to French control,"[5] the French steadily extended their encroachments on the prerogatives and activities of the Vietnamese administration in Haiphong. The Vietnamese, for their part, resisted to the best of their ability while maintaining a conciliatory attitude and obviously hoping to be able to adjust matters peacefully. Nevertheless, incidents increased in number and seriousness, culminating in pitched battles in the streets of Haiphong on November 20th and 21st.

The fighting, which had been aggressively extended by the French commander in Haiphong, Colonel Debès, was brought to a halt by a cease fire arranged between the French authorities in Hanoi and the Vietnam government (which had its capital at Hanoi). Colonel Lami, who represented the French in the cease fire negotiations, addressed a letter to Colonel Debès in which he stated:

> Every effort must be made to avoid the outbreak of a conflict which would immediately become general and which would endanger not only the isolated French posts in Haiphong and Vinh but also the [French] civilians in Hanoi.[6]

This, however, was not the attitude of the French authorities in Saigon. On September 21, while the cease-fire negotiations were in progress, General Valluy, commander of all French forces in Indo-China and acting High Commissioner (Admiral d'Argenlieu was then in Paris), sent the following telegram to Colonel Debès:

> Following Haiphong events of the 20th deem indispensable to profit from incident to improve our position Haiphong. Have given following instructions to General Morlière [commander at Hanoi and Debès' superior officer]: Guarantees to be obtained after quick inquiry are: Primo: Evacuation Haiphong by all regular and paramilitary Vietnamese armed forces. Secundo: Complete freedom for our troops to take up positions in the city.[7]

General Morlière, who received the same instructions, replied to

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General Valluy the same day as follows:

> In receipt of your telegram at the same time that am informed Colonel Debès has heard directly from you through COMAR [Commandant de la Marine]. To demand complete evacuation of Haiphong by regular and paramilitary Vietnamese forces is to decide with all certainty, I repeat with all certainty, on the conquest of the city which should be preceded, if huge losses are to be avoided, by its partial destruction by artillery. It is tantamount to complete rupture of the accords of March 6 and of the *modus vivendi* [signed by Ho Chi Minh and French Overseas Minister Moutet] and to the almost certain extension of fighting to all our Tonkin garrisons. Deem it my duty to indicate these probable repercussions. . . .[8]

In the face of this warning, in direct contravention of the cease fire which had just been agreed upon, and in the absence of any new incidents, General Valluy telegraphed direct to Colonel Debès the message which was to touch off the war:

> It appears clearly that we are facing premeditated aggressions carefully prepared by the Vietnamese army which seems no longer to obey its government. In these circumstances your honorable efforts at conciliation and division of cantonments are no longer admissible. The moment has come to give a rude lesson to those who have traitorously attacked us. By all the means at your disposal you should make yourself complete master of Haiphong and force the Vietnamese government and army to make amends. . . . You will confront President Ho Chi Minh with his overwhelming responsibilities and with the grievous consequences which can result from his attitude toward the French government.[9]

Was General Valluy acting on his own or was he following orders from Paris? On the basis of the evidence that has been published to date it is impossible to say. After a careful study of known facts, Henri Lanoue, from whose excellent article on the origins of the war we have been quoting, is forced to confess his inability to answer the question. His final word on the subject is perhaps worth quoting:

> Some day it will be necessary for the responsible government leaders of that period to say whether orders to act were given by them, or whether they allowed their hands to be forced by the initiatives of Valluy-Debès and others. If this second explanation should be offered, it would be hard to understand why no inquiry was ever undertaken and why no punishment—quite the contrary—was ever meted out to the originators of these initiatives.[10]

However this question is finally decided, there is no possible room for doubt that responsibility for the opening of hostilities rests

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squarely on the French side and not on the Vietnamese. On the morning of November 23rd, Colonel Debès delivered two ultimatums to the Vietnamese authorities in Haiphong and, on being told that they were standing on the cease fire agreement of the 21st, gave the order for operations to commence. Shells and bombs were poured into the defenseless city from land, sea, and air. The number of civilians killed that day was put at 20,000 by the Vietnamese; French authorities admit to 6,000.

After that, of course, it was war. Fighting broke out here and there immediately, and on December 19th the people of Hanoi rose against the French, killing forty-three in the course of the uprising. The French government and colonialists have always tried to fix responsibility for the war on this supposed "aggression" of the Vietnamese—with what justification we leave it to the reader to judge for himself. In any case, the state of war became general after December 19. The government of the Republic, knowing now what it was up against, retired once again to the hills and began to prepare for the long struggle ahead.

Efforts to End the War

This does not mean that Ho Chi Minh's government *wanted* to fight a war. The whole record from the very beginning shows that it wanted to negotiate a settlement with the French and that in order to do so it originally was quite prepared to concede France a special position—economically, culturally, and politically. It has remained ready to negotiate a settlement throughout the war, though whether it is still prepared to grant France special privileges is more doubtful.

The first Vietnamese offer to negotiate after the generalization of hostilities came from Ho's mountain headquarters on April 25, 1947. Several weeks later, Professor Paul Mus, one of France's leading experts on Indo-China and then adviser to the newly appointed High Commissioner, M. Emile Bollaert, brought the French answer to Ho at a meeting some sixty miles beyond the last French outpost. France's terms for a cease fire amounted in effect to unconditional surrender. Here they are:

1. Surrender of all arms;

2. Complete liberty for French troops to circulate throughout Vietnam;

3. Delivery to the French command of all non-Vietnamese combatants in the Vietnamese army;

4. Obligatory withdrawal of Vietnamese troops to zones designated by the French command;

5. Return of French hostages.[11]

Professor Mus, writing in *Le Monde* two years later, recounts

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how Ho Chi Minh, on hearing these terms, answered, with evident reference to the third paragraph: "In the French Union there is no place for cowards; if I accepted these conditions, I would be one."[12]

A check of the French press over the years of war reveals that the Vietnamese offer to negotiate a settlement was reiterated on many occasions. The following list of dates makes no claim to be exhaustive: June 14, June 20, July 18, September 23, September 30, 1947; January 15, April 12, September 6, December 21, 1948; July 20, December 20, 1949; January 2, 1950; December 25, 1951. After this, there seems to have been a relatively long interval. Then came Ho Chi Minh's famous interview with the Swedish paper *Expressen* last November in which he said: "If, drawing the lessons of these years of war, the French government wants to conclude an armistice and resolve the problem of Vietnam by negotiations, the people and the government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam are ready to consider French proposals." But there were no French proposals forthcoming, either then or when Ho's offer was again repeated in March of this year by the Vietnamese Foreign Minister.

The French attitude of rejection and silence is quite understandable. France started the war in the first place because she thought she could win a military victory and dictate her own terms of settlement. Professor Mus, to whom we have already referred as an expert on Indo-China and an official emissary to the Vietnamese, has written of an interview he had with General de Gaulle, then head of the French government, in January 1946. At the end, according to the professor, de Gaulle drew himself up to his full height and said: "We shall return to Indo-China because we are the stronger."[13] This is precisely the attitude that has dominated French thinking all along: it precludes the very idea of negotiation.

As we write, the Indo-China phase of the Geneva conference which opened on April 26 is about to start. With Dienbienphu lost and the whole of the Tonkin delta threatened, the French can hardly have any more illusions about being "the stronger." For the first time in seven years, official representatives of France and the Republic of Vietnam are about to sit down at the same table together. We shall soon know, perhaps even before this is in print, whether the present leaders of France have at last had a change of heart and are willing to negotiate. If they are ready, it is certain that they will not get as favorable terms as they could have had without ever firing a shot or losing a soldier. If they are not ready, it seems unlikely that they will long remain the leaders of France.

The Resurrection of Bao Dai

Two days after the French in Indo-China were locked up by the Japanese on March 9, 1945, Emperor Bao Dai made a declaration

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before all his ministers:

> The government of the Empire of Annam has today denounced the Franco-Annamite protectorate treaty and has declared the complete independence of the Empire of Annam which will henceforth strive to live as an independent nation. At the same time, as a member state of Greater East Asia it will cooperate in achieving coexistence and coprosperity, conformably to the common declaration of Greater Asia. Therefore, the Empire of Annam declares that, to attain these goals, it will collaborate with all its strength with Japan, entrusting itself entirely to the sincerity and goodwill of the Empire of Japan.[14]

Five months later, Bao Dai's reign ended in an act of abdication in which he declared: "We cannot repress a certain feeling of regret at the thought of our twenty years' reign during which it has been impossible for us to render any appreciable service to our country."[15]

Having accepted the position of "Supreme Councillor" to the new Republic of Vietnam as plain Mr. Vinh Tuy, the ex-Emperor repaired to Hong Kong, there to enjoy the fleshpots of oriental night life and, no doubt, to make suitable contacts among the innumerable diplomats and special agents who swarm around that fantastic city.

It was here that William C. Bullitt, former United States Ambassador to Paris, self-proclaimed friend of France and enemy of Communism, found the ex-Emperor and had a heart-to-heart talk with him. Shortly after, in the month of September 1947, the French Consul in Hong Kong telegraphed M. Bollaert, French High Commissioner in Saigon: "Mr. Bullitt received from his conversation with Bao Dai a very favorable impression and was surprised at the comprehension of the ex-Emperor, with whom, he says, it is possible to reach a solution."[16] It was at this time that Bao Dai announced his acceptance of leadership of the anti-Ho Chi Minh forces in Vietnam.

The solution Mr. Bullitt had in mind was set out in an article in *Life* magazine, issue of December 22, 1947. His "recommendations" to the French government were: (1) Kick out of France the delegation of the Vietnamese Republic then resident in Paris; (2) permit the non-Communist Vietnamese nationalists to form political, economic, and military organizations for controlling the country; (3) deal with the nationalists, especially with a view to opening up military bases to them; (4) cooperate with the nationalists in crushing the Communists.

Of course, it may have been pure coincidence, but in any case the French government was already acting precisely in accordance with Mr. Bullitt's advice. Five months later, on June 5, 1948, High Commissioner Bollaert signed the first of a series of accords with Bao Dai on board a French warship in the Bay of Along. By this agreement, "France solemnly recognizes the independence of Vietnam

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which has the privilege of freely realizing its own unity" and Vietnam "proclaims its adhesion to the French Union."[17]

"Hegel remarks somewhere," wrote Marx in the opening lines of *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte,* "that all great, world-historical facts and personages occur, as it were, twice. He has forgotten to add: the first time as tragedy, the second as farce. Caussidière for Danton, Louis Blanc for Robespierre, the Mountain of 1848 to 1851 for the Mountain of 1793 to 1795, the Nephew for the Uncle." Today we should add: Bao Dai for Ho Chi Minh, the "nationalists" of Hong Kong for the Vietminh.

We will not tax the reader's patience with an account of the ever-renewed negotiations between the French government and Bao Dai that have taken place in the years since this first agreement. Suffice it to say that they have been, as it were, a distorted reflection of the relations between France and the Vietnamese armies on the battlefields of Indo-China. Had France been able to win military victories, Bao Dai would have settled for anything he could get. But as France steadily lost ground to Ho Chi Minh's armies, Bao Dai's bargaining power rose until in the latest agreements it appears that France has been forced to concede, at least on paper, a considerably greater degree of independence than it has fought eight years to withhold from the Ho Chi Minh regime. Another illustration of history's fondness for irony. . . .

Bao Dai's re-entry onto the stage was no solo performance. From the first conversations with Mr. Bullitt, the former Emperor, now transformed into a "Chief of State," was accompanied and prompted by official and unofficial representatives of the United States. A steady stream of American notables—businessmen, cardinals and monsignori,* political VIPs from Governor Dewey to Vice President Nixon—has moved into and around the French-controlled areas of Indo-China. And this stream has been matched by other streams—of dollars to France and arms to Saigon and Haiphong.

In a strictly military sense, the war in Indo-China is still France's war. But in every other sense it has become America's war. Bao Dai,

* There are some two million Roman Catholics in Indo-China, including Bao Dai's wife, the ex-Empress Nam Phuong. In 1948, Cardinal Spellman and Msgr. Fulton Sheen visited the country—for reasons which were well expressed in a sermon which Sheen delivered in the Saigon Cathedral. "We bring to the peoples of Indo-China," he said, "the greetings of the Roman Catholic Church which has the greatest solicitude for the children of the Far East. Old Europe is politically finished. The Catholic Church is counting greatly on the Far East which will become a solid pillar of the faith of Christ in a hundred or two hundred years. . . . The Far Eastern visit of Cardinal Spellman is the best proof of the Roman Catholic Church's interest in the Far East." Quoted from French Catholic sources by Rivet, *op. cit.,* pp. 61-62.

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like the Bidaults and Pinays and Laniels who thought to use him, is Washington's man: his growing independence of France is but a measure of his growing dependence on the United States.

The situation, of course, is an untenable one. France cannot and will not go on bleeding for others. The reasons for this are not only and perhaps not even mainly political. They are also military: continuation of the war in Indo-China on the present basis would inevitably lead to the demoralization of the French officer corps. Here are the conclusions on this subject reached by Claude Bourdet and his fellow editors of *France-Observateur* after painstaking questioning of higher French officers who know the Indo-China situation well:

> Up to now the morale of French officers has remained high. Disasters like that at Hoa-Binh which also [that is, as in the case of Dienbienphu] resulted from a political masquerade made an unfavorable impression on them; but the French army has a tradition of not discussing overall plans no matter whether they succeed or fail. Even Dienbienphu would perhaps not have affected them deeply [this was written a week before the fall of Dienbienphu]. But it is precisely because these officers could assent to such heavy sacrifices in so questionable a war on the simple ground that "the interest of France demands it"—it is precisely for this reason that they are so revolted by the idea of fighting for Bao Dai who is distrusted by them as much as he is by his compatriots. It's no good reasoning and invoking the "solidarity of the free world"; one can no longer prevent the French officers from feeling that they are fighting for Maximilian [the ill-fated French invader of Mexico in the 1860s]: the state of mind of those returning to France or writing home is changing from day to day.[18]

But the morale of the officer corps is by no means the only military problem facing France as a result of the Indo-Chinese war. What is at stake is really nothing more nor less than the destruction of the French army as an effective fighting force. Here are a few extremely revealing excerpts from an article entitled "To Save the French Army" which appeared in *Le Monde* of April 29th under the signature of Robert Guillain, a special correspondent very recently back from Indo-China:

> I can still hear a friend in Indo-China saying to me as I was about to return: "Tell them that the hour of truth has struck. It is your duty to speak out." It was a military man speaking. I adjure my readers not to think that I am propagating defeatism. I affirm that I am speaking in the name of a great number of our soldiers and officers, men whose patriotism is beyond question, when I repeat what they have told me and what I have again and again been able to verify myself: the continuation of the war in Indo-China will mean the loss of our army (*met notre*

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armé en perdition).

It is an army decimated, full of gaps, exhausted. The terrible fault of our governors has been to demand without cease the performance of a task too big and at the same time to refuse the means of carrying it out. When an army has a mission beyond its means, the only possible course, if one does not want to see this army destroy itself, is to reduce the mission to the means available. But it is just the opposite that is being contemplated: the mission is to be kept and as a result it will be necessary to throw into the war everything that is left of our army in France, in Europe, and in the French Union.

The chief result of this war, fought with means insufficient to the tasks assigned, is that the command, at both Paris and Saigon, has had to look on in anguish while its cadres were disappearing in the crucible. The French army is not building itself up today, it is destroying itself. Judge for yourself.

Today we are not replacing officers as fast as they are being destroyed. It is now three graduating classes from Saint Cyr [France's West Point] that will have been destroyed in the last two years.

Since the beginning of this year, 1954, the number of French officers killed comes to about 250. If this pace continues we shall have lost by the end of the year 800 officers. The war in Indo-China is cutting our ranks on a scale comparable to a great international war.

The treacherous war in the Tonkin Delta, the least known and nevertheless the most terrible, sees on the average one officer fall every day. Thirty every month. Three hundred and sixty every year.

How replace all those who fall? It is here that there arises with dramatic intensity the problem of the "third tour of duty" and even of the "fourth tour of duty." A large number of our officers have been in Indo-China four or even six years. How can we demand of them that they serve another tour? How continue to insure replacements? And are we not witnessing the aging of our cadres, a striking deterioration of their quality, not to mention that of the simple recruits which becomes more and more disturbing?

There are, of course, no answers to these heart-rending questions. The French army is at the end of its resources. Faced with this fact, even the most intransigent rightist must call a halt. It is clear now that either the war must be stopped or it must become wholly America's war. Bao Dai's second reign is about to come to an inglorious end, or else this "Chief of State" (whom President Eisenhower addressed as "Your Majesty" after the fall of Dienbienphu) is about to take his place alongside Syngman Rhee and Chiang Kai-shek in Washington's stable of "Asian fighters against Asians."

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The Legitimate Government of Vietnam

American government spokesmen and the American press are all but unanimous in telling us that the Bao Dai outfit is the legitimate government of Vietnam, and that the regime which Ho Chi Minh heads is merely "the Vietminh rebels." This interpretation is presumably based on the following facts: In March 1949, Bao Dai exchanged letters with President Vincent Auriol of France which, when ratified, would make Vietnam an "Associated State." A similar procedure was carried out between France on the one hand and Laos and Cambodia on the other. Thus, by the end of 1949 these three regimes were, by French fiat as it were, declared to be "independent sovereign states," and they were promptly recognized as such by the Western powers.

A fine piece of political alchemy, surely. But it has one weakness: it failed to dispose of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam which, by all rules and canons of international law, was and is the legitimate government of Vietnam. On this point, let us hear the authoritative opinion of the French expert Gérard Lyon-Caen, Professor of Law at the University of Dijon:

> Which of the two governments, that of the Republic or that of the ex-Emperor Bao Dai, is the legitimate government of Vietnam?
>
> As a matter of law, the question is not open to doubt, *the only legitimate government is that of the Vietnamese Republic,* and this for two sets of reasons:
>
> 1. After his abdication of 1945, Bao Dai, according to his own statements, was nothing but a plain citizen. He was without any mandate to treat on behalf of his country with the French, a fact which renders the Auriol-Bao Dai accords of no juridical value and precludes their binding the Vietnamese nation. In addition, the government which he established did not result from regular democratic elections. To be recognized as a government the first condition is to be a *de facto* government, a government exercising effective authority over the majority of its territory and citizens: that is not true of Bao Dai's government which can come and go only where it is accompanied by French bayonets, that is to say, in a few centers.
>
> 2. On the other hand, the government formed by President Ho Chi Minh has authority over the greater part of the country and enjoys the confidence of its inhabitants. In January 1946—an unprecedented event—there took place elections in all Vietnam, general elections with universal suffrage from which emerged the present National Assembly. The latter is therefore the sole depositary of national sovereignty, and the government of Vietnam is that which enjoys the confidence of this Assembly. Since August 1945 there has been no interruption in the exercise

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of power, and the government of the Republic conserves the legitimacy which the French government itself conceded to it when it signed with it the accords of March 6, 1946.[19]

This might seem to be a quibble about unimportant legal technicalities. Actually it is much more. It is decisive for the whole question of who is guilty of aggression in Indo-China. No country is entitled, legally or morally, to set up the private citizen of another country as a government and to support that "government" with its armed forces. This is what the Soviet Union did in the case of Finland in 1939, and the Western powers were, quite rightly, unanimous in condemning the action. Subsequently the Soviet Union made at least partial amends by dropping the Kuusinen "government" and dealing once again with the legitimate Finnish government. France has done exactly the same thing in Vietnam, but the Western powers, far from condemning the action, have put their stamp of approval on it by recognizing the Bao Dai puppet regime. France, needless to say, has still to make amends.

Legally, there is not the slightest doubt that the French are guilty of aggression in Indo-China, nor that France's allies are fully implicated as knowing aids and accomplices. No amount of screaming about the "aggression" of "Communist imperialism," an entity with no existence in international law, can hide this damning fact from anyone who will take the trouble to examine the record of what has happened in Indo-China in the last eight years.

Communism and Indo-China

This is not to say that Communism, national and international, is not playing an important role in Indo-China, or that the facts in this regard are not a matter of perfectly legitimate concern to outsiders. The question is: what *are* the facts?

First, as to Ho Chi Minh. Perhaps as good a brief biography as any is that given by Professor Rivet of Paris:

> Ho Chi Minh is a Tonkinese peasant, a "ñakue." His life has been one of poverty and struggle. He is a Marxist. In 1914 he joined the French Socialist Party to which he belonged until the split of Tours (1920). Many of our Socialist leaders and militants knew him, living meagerly from his trade as a photographer. At the time of the split, he went with the majority and joined the Third International. Persecuted in Indo-China, he fled to Russia where he lived in as great poverty as he had in France until, along about 1926, he was made a professor at a popular Indo-Chinese university established at Canton.
>
> Ho Chi Minh knows our country [France], Russia, and China. He speaks French fluently. Returning to Indo-China in 1940, he became leader of the Resistance and of the party of

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> Vietnamese independence, and in due course the confidence of his countrymen elevated him to the first place in the country. Ho Chi Minh is a Communist and has never hidden the fact, but he is above all a patriot. He is a scrupulously honest man and lives the life of an ascetic.[20]

From the same set of facts, Mr. John Foster Dulles paints the following portrait of Ho Chi Minh: "He was indoctrinated in Moscow. He became an associate of the Russian, Borodin, when the latter was organizing the Chinese Communist Party which was to bring China into the Soviet orbit. Then Ho transferred his activities to Indo-China." (Speech of March 29.) No comment seems necessary —except maybe that Borodin did not arrive in China until well after the organization of the Chinese Communist Party, and the major achievement with which historians credit him is the *re*organization *not* of the Communist Party but of the Kuomintang.

What do the Vietnamese think of Ho? On this subject, all knowledgeable observers seem to be in agreement: he is held in the highest esteem, an esteem approaching reverence, by *all* his people. We will be content with a quotation from one among many sources by no means sympathetic to the Republic or Communism which might be cited. Writes Peggy Durdin in the *New York Times Magazine* of May 9th:

> Through more than seven bitter war years his name has been an asset beyond price to the Vietminh. What the simple peasants might not have done or suffered for an abstraction called communism—or even for that other abstraction called national independence—they have done and suffered for "Uncle Ho." . . . Nor is the veneration for Ho confined to the Vietminh side. Many Vietnamese who would willingly work against China-aided communism are reluctant to take a stand against Ho Chi Minh. Most Vietnamese believe that it is Ho Chi Minh who has wrenched from the French whatever degree of independence Bao Dai's Vietnam has achieved. "He is so greatly revered even on this side," said one official of the Bao Dai government, "that we don't dare attack him in our propaganda. . . ." "They have Ho Chi Minh and we have nothing," says a French officer bitterly. (P. 12 and pp. 69-71.)

Turning now to the part played by the Communist Party in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, there is little room for doubt as to the facts here either. The regime is a coalition of all patriotic organizations and groups—political, religious, and occupational—but the leading positions are held by Communists. Joseph Starobin, a correspondent for the *Daily Worker* who visited liberated Vietnam in 1953, has described the political situation simply and frankly in his informative book, *Eyewitness in Indo-China,* which has just been published:

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> There is no question that the Lao Dong [Communist Party] is the leading force. It is the party that provides the backbone of the government. But it is also true that the Lao Dong has known how to rally round itself a wide variety of other political circles. This ability is surely one of the secrets of its success. (P. 122.)

But the chief secret of its success, naturally, has been its effectiveness in providing leadership under extremely difficult conditions. Starting virtually from scratch, the Republic has built up an administration, an army, a by no means negligible manufacturing industry, an educational system; and it has done all this while fighting an all-out war and without controlling the urban nerve centers of the economy. The achievement is fully comparable to that of the Chinese Revolution, and the Communists have played a similarly distinguished and important role in the two countries.

Which raises the question of the role of the Chinese and Chinese Communism in Indo-China. Needless to say, this role was nonexistent, or at most negligible, prior to 1950. It was not until then that the Chinese liberation armies reached the Indo-Chinese border and established regular contact with the Ho Chi Minh government. By that time, the Republic had passed through its darkest days, and its armies had already begun the process of compressing and winning back the regions under French control. Soon afterwards, the Korean War broke out and absorbed all available Chinese military supplies and energies. There was trade, certainly involving arms already located in the South of China, across the Tonkin-Yunnan border; some Vietnamese personnel probably went to China for specialized training in this period. But no one, so far as we are aware, claims that Chinese assistance was a decisive factor for the Republic, either economically or militarily, while the Korean War was still in progress.

Things are supposed to have changed after the Korean Armistice. And doubtless they did. The Chinese and other countries in the socialist bloc had long since recognized the Republican regime as the legitimate government of Vietnam—an action which, in accordance with what we have learned, was perfectly legal and proper—and it would be surprising indeed if they did not expand their economic relations as soon and as fast as conditions would permit. The Vietnamese undoubtedly purchase as much arms and munitions as they can pay for and transport, and it is important to understand that this is a growing amount which has been a decisive factor in enabling the Republican army to adopt the new strategy and tactics which won the battle of Dienbienphu. It is also important to understand that the flow of arms and munitions from China to the Republic has never been and, for purely physical reasons connected with the scarcity of railroads and good roads, can hardly be expected to be in the foreseeable future anything like as large as the stream of arms and muni-

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tions from the United States to the French and the Bao Dai forces.

Furnishing arms, munitions, and even technical aid is one thing; furnishing combat manpower is another. It is the latter which the United States has been constantly threatening to do since Dulles' speech to the Overseas Press Club on March 29th. The excuse is that China is already furnishing fighting forces to the Vietnamese. In his April 5th appearance before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Dulles presented an intelligence document which, according to the *New York Times* of the next day, had "presumably just been cleared through this country's highest strategic body, the National Security Council," and which Dulles said "told an ominous story." Here is the document as presented in the *Times*:

> Most recent advices with respect to extent of Communist Chinese participation in the fighting at Dienbienphu indicate the following:
>
> 1. A Chinese Communist general, Li Chen-hou, is stationed at the Dienbienphu headquarters of General Giap, the Vietminh commander.
>
> 2. Under him there are nearly a score of Chinese Communist technical military advisers at headquarters of General Giap. Also, there are numerous other Chinese Communist military advisers at division level.
>
> 3. There are special telephone lines installed, maintained and operated by Chinese personnel.
>
> 4. There are a considerable number of .37-mm anti-aircraft guns radar-controlled at Dienbienphu, which are shooting through the clouds to bring down French aircraft. These guns are operated by Chinese.
>
> 5. In support of the battle there are approximately 1,000 supply trucks of which about one-half have arrived since March 1, all driven by Chinese Army personnel.
>
> 6. All the foregoing is, of course, in addition to the fact that the artillery, the ammunition and equipment generally comes from Communist China.

At the time, it was of course quite impossible for an outsider to evaluate these claims. But since then we have had some strong and pointed statements from the French who are in a much better position than Mr. Dulles to know the real situation in Indo-China. They permit us to say with reasonable assurance either that Mr. Dulles was grossly imposed upon (by his brother in the Central Intelligence Agency perhaps?) or that he is guilty of propagating a deliberate falsehood. In either case it is unpleasant, to say the least, to think that we may some day go to war on the strength of an intelligence report.

Charles Favrel, correspondent for *Le Monde,* tells in a dispatch

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from Hanoi, dated merely "April" and published on the 22nd of that month, of an airplane trip to Dienbienphu to parachute materiel to the beleaguered garrison. His purpose in going along, he tells us at the outset, was "to try to discover the characteristic cranium of one of those Chinese whom Messrs. Dulles and Laniel, from the vantage points of Washington and Paris, have perceived in the Vietminh army."

M. Favrel's first surprise was the accuracy of the AA fire which from the first shot came within a few meters of the plane. His second was to discover that incoming French pilots and ground communicated with each other *in the clear* about all details of position, cargoes to be dropped, and so on. Let M. Favrel take up the story at this point:

> If you were to furnish such data of a problem to the stupidest examinee, he would ask if you were making fun of him and would keep his fingers crossed, expecting a trap!
>
> The Viet gunners, whose ears are on their heads, do not try to understand: they shoot. No need of radar for this cut-and-dried job! Better still, the V.H.F. [Very High Frequency] gives them all details about the cargoes so that no one need be in ignorance. It says:
>
> "*Ici Gros-Matou, cap 305.* Altitude 9,500 feet at ten minutes from the vertical. Mission parachuting mortar shells.
>
> "*Ici Bolero, cap 300.* Altitude 9,000 feet at seventeen minutes from the vertical. Mission napalm on Dominique 7."
>
> And the aviation Command Post for directing the various planes according to urgency and priority:
>
> "*Pour Gros-Matou,* you will veer left thirty seconds after the top to come at 7,000 feet onto the axis of the dropping zone.
>
> "*Pour Bolero,* go up to 10,000 feet and wait in the eastern sector."*
>
> The Viet gunners who are given the coordinates for their fire have all the time for preparation. But still there are at our staff headquarters innocent souls who are astonished that reinforcements parachuted in at night are regularly met on the ground by flares specially prepared for them!
>
> The question arises as to who first started circulating the story of the radar-controlled guns? I don't know who he was but I know his colleague who first put out over the American airwaves the fable of the flying saucers in the air over Dienbienphu!
>
> In this respect it is disturbing to have to state that the censorship which puts all sorts of obstacles in the way of our

* Our command of military French is shaky to say the least but hardly so inadequate as to obscure the point.

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transmission of correct news, complacently passes the delirious inventions which the specialists in sensationalism discover in the resources of their imaginations.

Mr. Foster Dulles himself has taken up and put the stamp of his approval on the best of their finds. Only there is a little catch: on March 28th the Bigeard counter-attack on the village of Ban-Ong-Pet enabled us to capture five AA guns—guns which had no radar.

But Mr. Dulles, who has a poor opinion of the Viet gunners, sticks to his Chinese. He has disposed them on the battlefield and, having qualified them as radar operators, telephone specialists, truck drivers, technical advisers, etc., he endows them with a general, a certain Ly Chen-hou whose name he discovered in the gallery of faded stars to which were relegated the glories of Chiang Kai-shek's army which occupied Indo-China north of the 16th parallel.

The misfortune is that the Second Bureau [military intelligence] of the Tonkin Zone, which is in a better position than the Pentagon to know what is going on on the spot, has formally denied such allegations.

That the Vietminh cadres are formed in China, agreed. That food comes from China is certain. That some Russian and Czech materiel has been brought in is proved. But neither interrogations of prisoners of war nor the information furnished by our agents has given evidence of a single Chinese in the Vietminh armies.

And if certain official commentaries emanating from Saigon have emboldened M. Laniel to come to the assistance of Mr. Foster Dulles, these commentaries have been fabricated to meet the needs of the case.

If there is any desire to undertake an inquiry into the manner in which propaganda which flies in the face of realities is organized, there still are, fortunately, honest officers and generals who will say what they think of the business.

To this story, so revealing of the way of both soldiers and statesmen, we may add the finding of the editors of *France-Observateur* on the basis of careful inquiry in military circles in Paris:

> There are no Chinese on the Vietminh side except possibly some technical advisers *who do not fight* and perhaps some drivers of automobiles. At one time it was thought that the AA was manned by Chinese. This hypothesis has been given up. It has been noted that the Russian instructions for using the AA guns have been translated into Vietnamese, and there is no indication of the presence of Chinese personnel. On the contrary, on the occasion of the Bigeard parachutist counter-offensive in March, five AA pieces were captured by the French, their crews killed or captured. There were only Vietnamese among them.[21]

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So much, then, for Dulles' charges of Chinese participation in the Republican army. They were obviously made up out of whole cloth for the purpose of deceiving the American people and preparing them for a more direct role in the Indo-Chinese war.

To sum up on the problem of Communism and Indo-China: Ho Chi Minh is a Communist and a patriot who is held in the highest esteem by the entire Vietnamese nation. The Communists have come to occupy the leading role in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, not by the devious methods of conspiracy nor by appointment of Peking or Moscow, but because they proved themselves capable of providing effective leadership under the extremely difficult conditions of a war for national independence from colonial oppression. The aid they have received from the Chinese and Russians has not exceeded what is perfectly legal and proper for the government of one country to furnish to that of another.

You may not like Communism—that is everyone's right—but you cannot honestly talk about freedom and at the same time deny the right of the Vietnamese to choose Communist leadership if they want it, as they apparently do. And it is the sheerest kind of hypocrisy to assert that China does not have the right to do for the legitimate Democratic Republic of Vietnam what the United States claims the right to do on a much larger scale for France and the illegitimate regime of Bao Dai.

Which Way America?

The American people, by and large, are against colonialism and aggression and believe in the right of every country to manage its own affairs free from outside interference.

Rarely have these simple principles been so clearly and grossly violated as in present United States policy toward Indo-China.

To the extent that we support France—and we are already paying about four-fifths of the cost of the French military effort in Indo-China—we support both colonialism and aggression. To the extent that we support Bao Dai, we claim the right to tell the Vietnamese people who should rule them. And if we send American forces into Indo-China, as Dulles and other high government spokesmen have repeatedly threatened to do in the last two months, we shall be guilty of aggression ourselves.

There is no way to avoid these conclusions about our policy and no extenuating circumstances to excuse it. The facts, as we hope the foregoing recital has shown to the satisfaction of even the most skeptical, are clear and unambiguous.

What are we going to do about it?

Are we going to take the position that anti-Communism justifies

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anything, including colonialism, interference in the affairs of other countries, and aggression? That way, let us be perfectly clear about it, lies war and more war leading ultimately to full-scale national disaster.

Or are we going to call a halt to the degrading and ruinous policy our leaders have been pursuing and begin to find our way back to a course based on the principles on which this country was founded, the principles of national independence and respect for the rights of others?

There never has been and never will be a clearer test case than Indo-China. The time for decision is now. Let everyone who cares about the future of our country stand up and speak out today. Tomorrow may be too late.

(May 15, 1954)

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1 Jean Chesneaux, "Le Laos sort de l'ombre," *Cahiers Internationaux,* May 1953, p. 84.

2 *Encyclopedia Britannica,* 13th ed., Art. "Indo-China, French," Vol. 14, pp. 493-494.

3 The text of the agreement is taken from Paul Rivet, "Le Drame Franco-Vietnamien," *Cahiers Internationaux,* June 1949, p. 46.

4 Rivet, *op. cit.,* p. 47.

5 Quoted from official documents by H. Lanoue, "Comment a debuté la guerre du Viet-Nam: le massacre de Haiphong (23 novembre 1946)," *Cahiers Internationaux,* Nov. 1952, p. 73. This is a detailed and completely documented study of the beginning of the war by an engineer who was chief of personnel at the Saigon arsenal in the years 1946-1948.

6 *Ibid.,* p. 77.

7 *Ibid.,* pp. 77-78.

8 *Ibid.,* p. 78.

9 *Ibid.,* p. 78.

10 *Ibid.,* p. 84.

11 Rivet, *op. cit.,* p. 58.

12 *Ibid.,* p. 59.

13 Paul Mus, "Ma 'mission' auprès du Vietminh: ne recommençons pas 1947," *L'Observateur,* December 24, 1953, p. 24.

14 Rivet, *op. cit.,* pp. 59-60.

15 *Ibid.,* p. 60.

16 Jacques Mitterand, "La France doit traiter," *Cahiers Internationaux,* October 1950, p. 40. At the time this article was written, Mitterand was a Councillor of the French Union.

17 Rivet, *op. cit.,* p. 61.

18 "Vietnam: L'Armée dégage sa responsabilité," *France-Observateur* (formerly *L'Observateur*), April 29, 1954, p. 9.

19 Gérard Lyon-Caen, "La République démocratique du Vietnam," *Cahiers Internationaux,* October 1950. It should perhaps be added that no change has taken place in the legal position since 1950.

20 Rivet, *op. cit.,* p. 46.

21 "Vietnam: L'armée dégage sa responsabilité," *France-Observateur,* April 29, 1954, p. 9.

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THE H-BOMB TERROR IN JAPAN

BY TOKUE SHIBATA

On March 14, a small Japanese fishing boat with twenty-three crewmen and a cargo of tuna entered the port of Yaizu, about 100 miles southwest of Tokyo. The tuna were sent to the Tokyo market as usual. The crewmen, some of them oversunburned, went to the local hospital and told the doctor of their strange experience.

According to *Asahi Weekly* (March 28), the story is as follows: At about 4:12 a.m., March 1st, while they were adrift for netting, some crewmen saw a red flash on the western horizon and heard a thunderous explosion about seven minutes later. They wondered what had happened and some of them feared that it might be a dangerous A-bomb test. But the captain thought that, since their position was outside the danger area announced by the United States Navy, they had nothing to fear. However, they stopped their fishing and moved away. About three hours later, white ashes fell down calmly, covering the ship with a thin layer. No one paid attention to it, but four or five days later the crewmen broke out with burn symptoms which at the time they thought merely due to excessive sunburn.

Hearing this story, nuclear experts from the university in that prefecture inspected the infected fishing boat two days after the crewmen's landing and reported "strong" radiation. Later, scientists from Tokyo University also began to analyze the white ashes on the boat and reported "Death Ashes!" Then the news spread all over Japan, and the government tried to seize all tuna caught by that boat, the Fukuryu Maru. Scientists in Tokyo checked all tuna in the market there and a Geiger test proved 4,400 pounds of tuna and shark to be very dangerous. According to the *Nippon Times* (March 17th), "The scientists said there was enough radioactive substance in each fish *to cause death if a person stood within one foot of the fish longer than an hour.*" (Emphasis added.) During the night of March 16th-17th, the contaminated fish were buried in an empty lot near the Tokyo Central Fish Market. Later, in numerous ships coming from the central part of the Pacific Ocean, there were found many

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Tokue Shibata, now a lecturer in economics at a Japanese university, did graduate work in the United States in the period 1951-1953.

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radioactive fishes which the fishermen were forced to throw away offshore.

Americans, especially those who live in the midwest, are not great fish eaters, and to them beef or chicken is much more important than tuna or shark. But in Japan, since 85 million people live in a small area surrounded by ocean, fish is very important for their daily life, and especially tuna is called "chicken-of-the-ocean." Suppose death ashes from an H-bomb test fell down on the stockyards of Omaha or Chicago and many radioactive cattle had to be buried. How much trouble would happen then? I think you can easily imagine how the Japanese were thrown into panic by the ominous events which followed the Bikini explosions.

It is said that the bomb on March 1st developed a power of 14 megatons, almost twice the power American scientists had estimated. This miscalculation may be understandable in view of the incredible complexity of making such estimates, and the Bikini incident itself might be called an unfortunate accident. However, the real troubles only began after that, and nearly every action by the American authorities has served to make them worse.

We expected that the spokesman of the United States government would at least say, "We are terribly sorry and we will take special care not to allow this kind of accident to happen again." Soon after the incident, however, Mr. Cole, Chairman of the Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy, stated that the Japanese fishermen who returned from the Bikini area might be suspected of engaging in spying activities, and accused the Japanese press of exaggerating news of the Bikini radiation victims. Really, another man's burden is always light. All fishermen who were outside the danger area and forced to throw out their contaminated fish were angry at Mr. Cole's statement.

As for the position of the Fukuryu Maru at the time of the explosion, the Japanese government investigated the ship's navigation diary and other materials and concluded that it was 14 miles outside the danger area (about 70 miles from Bikini). Nevertheless, on March 31, Mr. Strauss, Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, declared, "It is certain that the ship was inside of the danger area." Mr. Strauss must have clairvoyant powers, because he can judge distances without any concrete investigation.

We expected that the United States authorities might withdraw the danger area or at least give advance notice of coming H-bomb tests. However, contrary to our expectation, they increased the danger area sixfold and in addition made successive tests at that area (up to the time of writing on March 26 and April 7) with no advance notice. It is a great loss for the Japanese fishing industry to be de-

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prived of such large fishing grounds and to be forced to take a roundabout way to avoid the danger area. Japanese jurists are asking the question whether one country is entitled to set a large danger area for a long period in the high seas where all ships should be able to navigate freely.

Since a large quantity of radioactive fish has been brought to our ports and people feared to buy, the Ministry of Welfare sent examiners to the fishing ports, while all fish stores in Tokyo showed large placards saying, "All fish in my shop guaranteed to be safe." Dr. Eisenbud, Director of the American Atomic Energy Commission's Health and Safety Laboratory, came to Japan to help our fish examiners. We welcomed him, and he issued a statement to us, on March 24th, "Fish caught outside the designated area have not been affected by radioactivity and are therefore harmless," and suggested to our fish examiners that a *simple* Geiger test is enough. Strange to say, however, he instructed them simultaneously to conduct a "rigid examination of tuna for export to the U.S." Is our life, then, worth less? Even fish caught outside the designated area have been found dangerous. *Nippon Times* (April 12) reported:

> Japanese scientists studying why radioactivity was registered by only seven fish of some 850,000 pounds of tuna brought to Shimizu Thursday by the 141-ton Shoho Maru concluded today that the tuna were contaminated from eating atom-radiated small fish. The tuna were caught by the . . . Shoho Maru . . . some *400 miles south of Bikini, outside* the expanded H-bomb test danger zone at the time of the second H-bomb blast March 26. (Emphasis added.)

Twenty-three Fukuryu Maru crewmen are now in hospitals in Tokyo, but the trouble for them is the necessary money for their medical care and for the living expenses of their families in Yaizu. We have not heard of any concrete American plan for compensating their losses. On April 8, the same *Nippon Times* reported, "Three atom-injured Japanese fishermen have reached the critical stage of their atomic-age illness leukopenia, the director of Tokyo University Hospital said yesterday." In the *Asahi Evening News* (April 9), I found a letter by Professor Shigeo Oketani which said:

> When Japanese doctors, out of the necessity of treating the patients, asked to be enlightened on the composition of the radioactive substance from the hydrogen bomb, they were told that "doctors only need to treat the burns and cure them and that there is no need for them to know anything about radiation." It was also suspected that the Japanese fishing boat had been inside the closed area for espionage purposes. Such reports from the American side can only be construed as an attempt to shift the responsibility. I doubt the mentality of Americans who make such

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comments. Such illogical and hysterical statements have done more than anything else to drive Japanese who were not previously anti-American to the anti-American side.

And how contradictory was their action in conducting a strict Geiger test on tuna to be canned for export to America while telling the Japanese that there is no danger in eating it. The Communist Party is capitalizing on this and is using it as propaganda material.

Japan's clumsiness in domestic politics and economics is well known abroad but I know from long years of residence overseas that the Japanese are not so inferior.

I ask of America: please do not treat us Japanese as fools.

At the end of March, we heard very warm-hearted news from the Japanese minister in Los Angeles—"Out of Americans' goodwill, two kinds of specific remedies for A-bomb injuries will be sent by an airplane." Several days later, many newspapers showed a large picture of a big box at the airport. When our medical doctors opened it in Tokyo, they found merely a paste useless for the radiation injuries and some leaves used as an *Indian charm* against burns. (*Asahi Weekly* and *Yomiuri Weekly* reported this in detail.) Really, if you should send your toothpaste to the heart of New Guinea, the barbarians there would be much pleased with it.

Needless to say, American doctors, especially the director of the Hiroshima branch of the A-bomb Effect Research Institute, paid special attention to these latest victims and offered to collaborate with Japanese doctors. However, once the victims received his check-up, they all refused to see him again. They complained: "We expected to see his humanism and eagerness to save our pain, but he came here merely from curiosity and to write his report. He never consoled us, but checked our bodies all day long. We are not guinea pigs."

Of course there must have been many unfortunate misunderstandings between the American and Japanese governments, but anyhow facts are facts, and by reading my article, you can easily understand how the American authorities irritated the Japanese people. Unfortunately, the Japanese government is not strong enough to stand up to the American ruling class and dares not make a strong protest against this incident; so I am afraid the American people do not know the full truth about the terror of Bikini. Now you will see how the Japanese experienced panic and anger. Actually, many of them cried, "Protest against Americans," "Remember Hiroshima," "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth."

But, as time passes, the situation has changed into a new stage, and new voices are heard. Before this incident happened, our people had thought that the A-bomb tests were held at the opposite side

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of the world and had nothing to do with our daily life. But now, whenever we eat fish on our dining tables, we have to remember and face the H-bomb terror. We have to remember that our scientists have proved the awful power of the Bikini H-bomb by analyzing the white death ashes brought back by the Fukuryu Maru. Through our daily experience, we have discovered the fact that only a few H-bombs will be enough to destroy not only all the Japanese nation but also countless other human lives.

Today's paper, *Nippon Times,* reported: "Washington, April 11 (INS)—Atomic sources . . . indicated that the H-bomb will be converted into what might be called a guided missile, in the sense that the bomb will be self-powered for some distance away from the plane after it is dropped." This means that, in the next war, since Russia will make the same kind of weapon, both sides will use the terrible power of H-bombs against which they have no methods of defense, and not merely will they die stabbing each other with their swords, but *all human beings* will be threatened with death.

Thus we can declare that the time has come when the human race faces the question, "To be or not to be." It seems to me that the problem for us Japanese is far beyond "Remember Hiroshima" or "Revenge on Americans"; it has reached the most serious and critical stage—"Can humanity itself survive or not?" Through our threefold experience of Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and Bikini, we can say this without any exaggeration. We believe we can (or rather should) forget all three unfortunate experiences, but only if the H-bomb terror stops and peace is secured. We are already past the stage of "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth," and have come to the new phase, "First be reconciled to thy brother, and . . . let us love one another." Unless we enter this new phase, all human beings will be in danger of hell fire.

Here, I appeal to the American conscience—"Stop making and testing Hell Bombs."

My first wish is to see this plague to mankind banished from the earth and the sons and daughters of this world employed in more pleasant and innocent amusements than in preparing implements and exercising them for the destruction of mankind.

—George Washington, letter to David Humphreys, 1785

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AMERICA MUST BE TOLD

BY ANEURIN BEVAN

Americans who get all their information from reading their own newspapers are apt to have a picture of Aneurin Bevan as a sort of left-wing British analogue of McCarthy. This is an absurd distortion of the truth. Actually, Bevan is the best friend the American people have in Britain for the very simple reason that he is the most uncompromising spokesman for peace and international sanity. In the interest of setting the picture straight we publish below, by special permission, Mr. Bevan's leading article in the April 16th issue of the London *Tribune.*

For how large a group in Britain does Bevan speak? It is impossible to give precise figures, but it is certain that his real strength is at the grass-roots level rather than in Parliament or in the Labor Party apparatus. This is indeed the most hopeful aspect of the present situation, for it holds out the promise of future change in the right, or rather left, direction. We cite the following interesting testimony, contained in a letter from England by a self-styled "extreme right winger" which appeared in the *New York Times Magazine* of May 16th: "Of the local Councils in England (approximating American wards) 62 percent are Socialist-dominated. On a random poll taken during April of 200 separate members (Socialists) of these particular Councils, not less than 84 percent of the effective replies supported Bevan individually and his actions generally. . . . Even more so, in the constituencies, where over 70 percent of the vote is pro-Bevan. . . ."—THE EDITORS

Ever since the war, British diplomacy has been influenced by one dominant consideration—fear of American isolationism.

Ernest Bevin believed it was his main task to prevent America from withdrawing into its traditional aloofness. This was the mainspring of his diplomatic strategy, the source of its strengths and of its weaknesses.

In those days there was a lot to be said on both sides. But about one aspect of it there is no question. It lays us open to indefinite blackmail.

If the United States is led to believe that in the last resort, we shall always bow to her wishes, then from the outset we exert no leverage on her policy.

In Washington they have become quite cynical about it. "They'll tag along in the end," they say.

We have paid a heavy price for this nightmare fear of American isolation.

We succumbed to pressure from the United States and allowed

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the Ruhr industries to be restored to their former owners. We did this against the facts of history and in spite of our instinctive distrust of the consequences.

Now We Pay The Price

The fruit of this folly is now apparent. A reactionary government has been financed into existence in Western Germany, and all the evidence available points to a revival of Nazism.

Schumacher, the leader of the German Socialists, reproached us—the British Socialists—for this policy, and the reproach was justified.

So dominant was our fear that America would once more desert us that we preferred to offend our Socialist comrades rather than risk the anger of the ruling circles in the U.S.A. It is a sad story and bitterly shall we repent it.

Again, we permitted ourselves to be rushed into the acceptance of an inflated arms program which was beyond our means. To this we sacrificed a part of our cherished social services, faced rising prices, and in the end it proved impossible to carry out. But it weakened the labor movement in Britain by creating dissensions among its members.

The same panic caused the U.S.A. to believe that a German army was essential to the defense of Europe. To that we have sacrificed whatever prospects there were of working-class unity in France, and we are in danger of seeing the same lamentable result in Britain.

We were led to stigmatize revolutionary China as an "aggressor" in Korea, and this is now held to stand in the way of her formal recognition.

I am not here attempting a description of American foreign policy since the war. I confine myself only to a few of the positions we were led to adopt because we were reluctant to carry our opposition to American pressure to the point of possible rupture.

Nor do I withhold tribute to the assistance given under Marshall aid. Unfortunately that imaginative and generous enterprise has now degenerated into a program of military assistance only.

The threat now comes from Washington that the paymaster will stop payment unless we dance to tunes approved by him.

And now the squalid and pitiful story is working up to its climax. We are to be invited to scupper the Geneva Conference before it assembles.

This Conference was the only hopeful thing that emerged from the Berlin Conference. But this was scarcely ended before the United States made it clear that in no circumstances would recognition for revolutionary China be traded for peace in Indo-China.

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We Want To Know

Why then is China invited to Geneva? Is it only to give her a venue for surrender?

Are we to have negotiation or bullying? Peacemaking or war-making? The hand of friendship or the threat of the H-bomb?

We want to know. And we want to know now before the Conference starts.

In the meantime Mr. Foster Dulles visits Europe, ostensibly to seek agreement with Britain and France concerning the policy to be adopted at Geneva. Or is it submission he is after? Because, unless it is submission, he must retreat from the position he has taken up.

The only card we can play at Geneva is recognition of China, in return for peace in Indo-China. And that means peace on the basis of national independence for the Indo-Chinese.

They must be independent of everybody. France as well as China, and that goes for the United States as well. The independence of Indo-China cannot be traded away.

Peace cannot be based permanently on colonial exploitation. Peace is not to be founded on the assumption that the status of the colonial peoples can be frozen where it is now.

The rule of collective peace in the world must provide for social progress and for the attainment of self-government by subject peoples. Otherwise their legitimate struggles for nationhood will endanger peace. Peace and injustice can never live long together.

The Right To Be Communist

There are no qualifications to this. If the Indo-Chinese elect to go Communist, they should be allowed to do so.

It is here that the collision with American policy occurs. She regards every extension of Communism as an accession of strength to the Soviet Union. And so it well may be, if the treatment accorded to China is the pattern to be followed.

British thinking has never followed this line. When the revolution occurred in China, we took the view that it was a matter for the Chinese.

It was possible to conceive circumstances where the presence of revolutionary China on the Security Council of the United Nations might modify the attitude of the Soviet Union. It would end her complete dominance of the Communist world and compel her to adjust her conduct to conform with the needs of other nations.

The United States refused to accept this view, and we are now paying part of the price for her stubbornness and blindness.

We must now refuse to pay the rest of the price. The demand

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that we should join an alliance for the containment of Communism in Southeast Asia is not sought as an instrument for the prevention of war, but rather as an extension, into the international field, of the defense of American social, political, and economic values.

The military threat is a cover for counter-revolutionary measures. We are being asked to join, not an alliance for the preservation of peace, but a bulwark against political and social progress.

Where the progress is arrested by colonial powers or by black reaction the struggle takes on a more and more revolutionary color. We are then asked to oppose it in the shape of resistance to Communist aggression.

It is an old story and by now we should be familiar with it.

This new move by the United States, therefore, brings us up against the old dilemma. Should we agree in the end, or should we carry our opposition to the point where it might mean a break?

The answer is quite simply that we shall never be able to make America understand our attitude and adjust herself to it until we are prepared to break with her unless she does.

The alliance with America was forged in the hope of preventing war. It was not intended as opposition to Communism as such. If America wishes this, then the alliance is distorted beyond its original purpose.

We should tell America so in the plainest possible terms. If after that she persists, then she must do so alone.

I have found that to do the right thing is generally the right thing to do.

Lord Grey of Fallodon

We have forgotten the very principle of our origin, if we have forgotten how to object, how to resist, how to agitate, how to pull down and build up, even to the extent of revolutionary practices, if it be necessary to readjust matters.

—Woodrow Wilson, *The New Freedom*

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BIG BUSINESS AND FASCISM: LIGHT ON THE GERMAN CASE

Before the advent of the Hitler regime in Germany, the Reichsverband der Deutschen Industrie (Germany's equivalent of our National Association of Manufacturers) circulated privately to its members a newsletter entitled *Deutsche Führerbriefe* (German Leader Letters). Below, we publish a highly revealing excerpt from one of these Letters, dated September 1932, written at the bottom of the Great Depression, and concerned with the question of how to save capitalism under the then-existing conditions in Germany. We do not know whether the *Deutsche Führerbriefe* are available in this country and would be glad to hear from any of our readers who may have information on this subject. The passage below is quoted in an article in the March, 1954, issue of the West German Social Democratic monthly *Links,* from which we have translated it.—THE EDITORS

The problem of consolidating the bourgeois regime in postwar Germany is in general conditioned by the fact that the section of the bourgeoisie which controls the economy has become too small to rule by itself. Unless it is to put its confidence in the extremely dangerous expedient of naked military rule, it must associate with itself strata of the population which do not belong to it but which can perform the indispensable service of anchoring its rule in the people and thus becoming the real or ultimate guarantor of that rule. In the first period of postwar consolidation, this role was fulfilled by Social Democracy.

In that period, the split in the ranks of the working class was founded on the wage and welfare gains which Social Democracy coined out of the revolutionary upheavals of 1918 and later. These gains acted as a sort of safety valve which assured important advantages to the employed and organized part of the working class as against the unemployed and fluctuating mass of workers and which enabled this favored sector to avoid the worst consequences of unemployment and economic crisis.

The political boundary between the Social Democratic Party and the Communist Party followed almost exactly the social and economic line traced out by this protective mechanism. And since the Social Democratic transformation of the revolution into welfare gains coincided with the shift of the struggle from the shops and streets to Parliament, the Ministries, and the Chancellery—that is to say, coincided with the replacement of struggle from below by security from above—it followed that not only the Social Democratic Party and the trade unions but also the entire sector of the working class which followed their leadership became irrevocably tied to the bourgeois

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state and committed to sharing in its power so long as there existed any possibility of defending in this way the gains that had been won and so long as the workers remained loyal to the existing leadership. Four conclusions from this analysis are of special importance:

(1) The policy of the lesser evil is not a tactic, it is the political essence of social democracy.

(2) The attachment of the trade union bureaucracy to the state is stronger than its attachment to Marxism or the Social Democratic Party, and this holds for any bourgeois regime which is willing to take the trade union bureaucracy into partnership.

(3) The attachment of the trade unions to the Social Democratic Party stands and falls politically with parliamentarism.

(4) The possibility of reconciling a liberal social order with monopoly capitalism depends on the existence of an automatic mechanism for splitting the working class. A liberal bourgeois regime must not only be a parliamentary regime, it must also rest on the Social Democratic Party and allow the latter to achieve sufficient gains. A bourgeois regime which destroys these gains must sacrifice both the Social Democratic Party and parliamentarism, it must create a substitute for Social Democracy, and it must go over to an authoritarian social order.

We are now experiencing this process of transition because the economic crisis has forcibly destroyed the earlier gains. The automatic splitting mechanism stopped working with the disappearance of social benefits, and the workers have been put on the road to Communism. Bourgeois rule is approaching the emergency situation of a military dictatorship.

Since the old protective mechanism cannot be made to operate in an adequate fashion, it follows that we can be saved from the abyss only if the splitting and binding of the working class can be achieved by new and more direct methods. It is here that we find the positive possibilities and tasks of National Socialism.

If National Socialism should succeed in incorporating the trade unions in an authoritarian social order, as the Social Democrats formerly incorporated them in a liberal order, then National Socialism would perform a decisive function for the future of bourgeois rule and would have to be accorded an organized position in the social and state system of this rule.

It is often argued against the incorporation of the trade unions under National Socialist leadership that it would contain the danger of a development along state capitalist or even socialist lines. But as a matter of fact it would eliminate this danger. There is no third way between a reconsolidation of bourgeois rule on the one hand and the Communist revolution on the other.

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PROBLEMS OF AMERICAN SOCIALISM

The discussion which ran under the heading of "Problems of American Socialism" in the May issue contained no contributions from abroad. It did, however, evoke a thoughtful comment from one of our regular correspondents, "Political Economist," who is now in Western Europe, and we are publishing this comment both for its intrinsic merit and because it stresses aspects of the subject under discussion which were largely neglected by writers in the United States. For reasons of space, we are again obliged to put over for a month our own concluding remarks on the discussion as a whole. —THE EDITORS

There was one striking omission in the symposium on problems of American socialism. No contributor made any explicit reference to the distinction between the objective and subjective factors affecting political alignments within the United States. A radical movement is effective when both the objective and subjective elements in a given situation are favorable. If the former are favorable and the latter deficient, performance is liable to fall far short of promise or potentiality. To cite a classical instance, the German revolution at the end of World War I failed in spite of the favorable objective situation because of its weaknesses on the subjective side. Naturally, subjective factors are no less capable of historical explanation in terms of longer-run objective causes than are the objective factors themselves. But in any immediate political context the distinction is both useful and correct.

When we examine the American scene, the outstanding objective fact is that the American ruling class is by far the most powerful capitalist class in the world. It is the bulwark of international reaction. Without its aggressive leadership in the sphere of foreign policy, crucial countries such as France and Italy (and probably Germany and Japan), not to mention such colonial or semi-colonial countries as Indonesia, Iran, and Indo-China, would almost certainly have gone socialist after World War II. No other capitalist power is capable of exercising this leadership.

But—and this is the second important factor—the strength of American capitalism is relative, not absolute. American capitalism is strong because other capitalist countries are weak. It is not so strong as compared to either the socialist countries or to its own internal position a generation ago. The camp of socialism is daily advancing and already embraces one-third of the world's inhabitants. Perhaps it is not too much to say that the triumph of the Chinese Revolution in 1949 marked a definitive shift in the world balance of forces in favor of socialism. Both because the capitalist system as a whole is

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decaying and because the socialist system is growing, American capitalism is weaker than it was in the 20s or 30s, despite all appearances and propaganda to the contrary. This weakness is concealed from many, if not most, Americans by the fact that the American economy has expanded in the last fifteen years.

This expansion has been based almost entirely on war or the threat of war. It is not the product of the "normal" recuperative powers of the system and would not have started or been maintained without the war stimulus. This is the third important objective factor. The capitalist system is now so thoroughly decadent that it can only keep going on a relatively full-employment basis by breeding war or sowing the dragon seeds of war. All the vaunted virtues of the free-enterprise system turn out to be myths when tested in the light of this one hard fact. The stock market, which is not altogether unreliable as a barometer of the state of capitalism, reflects this phenomenon very clearly.

There are a number of profoundly significant contradictions in the position of American capitalism. There is a marked gap between the external weakness of American capitalism and its comparative internal strength. Externally, United States imperialism is extremely predatory and aggressive, and its spokesmen talk as if it were as powerful abroad as it is at home. In fact, it has achieved only limited and essentially transient successes and has suffered a number of resounding defeats; the outstanding defeat, of course, was the liquidation of Chiang Kai-shek's regime on the mainland of China. It has also had to recognize socialist strength both in the truce in Korea and in the at-least-temporary failure of its attempt to precipitate an interventionist war in Indo-China.

Domestically, there is no less marked a contradiction between the economic instability and precariousness of American capitalism and its apparent political stability. The specter of depression perpetually haunts the American ruling class and, of course, exerts an immediate and explosive influence on its foreign policy. In the nature of the case, this contradiction, like the first, cannot last indefinitely. The growth of McCarthyism as a political force, while mirroring the emergence of a "new Zaibatsu" since 1939 (see "The Roots and Prospects of McCarthyism" in MR for January), also mirrors the ruling class's fear of a depression and its dim awareness of the gloomy long-run prospects. McCarthyism is *not only* the new mob trying to muscle in, it is *also* the old mob hedging its bets in case the preservation of the biggest racket of the lot can be secured only by the most drastic suppression of implicit as well as explicit threats to the survival of any rackets at all. And whatever else it is, McCarthyism is a clear-cut manifestation not of the internal political *strength* but of the political *weakness* of American capitalism.

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The third and biggest contradiction of all is to be found in the striking lack of parallelism between the objective and subjective political factors as far as the functioning of socialist groups in America is concerned. Taken in their totality, the objective factors are by no means unfavorable. The whole world is visibly evolving towards socialism and American capitalism shows unmistakable symptoms of rotten ripeness. At this very moment, America is the most hated country in the world, and its economy is tottering on the brink of a depression. Yet the socialist movement in the United States is weaker than it has been for at least two generations.

Of course, the starkly adverse nature of the subjective factors in the American political situation has its historical explanation in the preservation of the mythology of a free-enterprise classless society, the hold of the two-party system, the political backwardness of the American labor movement, the complications of color and diverse ethnic origin, the apparent and deceptive looseness of class stratification, and so on. But these factors are not new. They also operated in the past when the American radical movement had incomparably more weight, influence, and prestige than it has today. Even the hysteria is not altogether new: Veblen's description of America in his magnificent essay entitled "Dementia Praecox," written 32 years ago (and reprinted in *Essays in Our Changing Order*), might well have been penned yesterday. What is new is, first, the sustained and virulent nature of the reaction, the prolongation of the hysteria to a period now verging on almost a decade; and second, the extent of the demoralization of the forces of the Left. The former is the product of the pervasiveness of the contradiction between capitalism and socialism and of the fact that America is the last reserve of world capitalism, which enables the American ruling class to exploit chauvinism to the hilt, pro-capitalism being identified with Americanism and socialism with anti- or un-Americanism. The demoralization of the Left is a product both of the severity and duration of the repression and of the traditional political immaturity of the American labor movement.

This situation cannot be expected to continue indefinitely. Naturally, American socialists worthy of the name cannot depend on its automatic elimination, nor can they count on the process of capitalist decay to do the job for them. They have learned the fallacies of all theories of spontaneity in kindergarten. And they know that, given a by-no-means inherently unfavorable long-run objective situation, it is within their capabilities to do something about the subjective factors.

At present, the forces of the American Left are weak, disunited, and sectarian and have at most only a small reliable mass base. This is the fundamental obstacle in the way of the American socialist

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movement's growth. Unless it can unite and break out of its sectarian prison, it will remain isolated and ineffectual even if the objective situation becomes considerably more favorable.

As usual, diagnosis is simpler than prescription. The negative measures which are called for are fairly obvious, but the feasible positive measures necessary to create the nucleus for a real farmer-labor party resting on solid mass support are much harder to find. First, some coalescence, however loose, of the men of the Left is indispensable to their survival and effective functioning. Second, there are one or two simple moral issues which it should be possible to utilize as the starting point for systematic propaganda and which American socialists seem largely to have ignored. The most obvious of these issues is the H-bomb, which has changed the whole international situation in terms of *Realpolitik* and which MR has unaccountably passed over.* For all practical purposes Russia and the United States are now equal in their powers of destruction. Professor Blackett, who as a Nobel laureate in physics is an indisputable authority in the field of nuclear energy, has clearly shown this in an article in the *New Statesman & Nation* of February 13th which deserves to be more widely known. Neither America nor Russia can win by using the H-bomb, since neither is immune from attack. If America has long-range bombers, submarines, and atomic projectiles, so has Russia. These facts make nonsense of the whole rickety structure of Dulles' foreign policy and particularly of his manic-depressive doctrine of instant and massive retaliation. They are so glaring that their constant repetition must have some effect, however hostile the general environment.

One would have thought that a campaign for the banning of the H-bomb as a weapon of war would begin to make some impression if only because of its appeal to the most elemental and widespread of all drives, the drive for self-preservation. The H-bomb tests have created a big stir in England both among the English people in general and *within* the Labor Party. The Coventry City Council has dramatized the whole issue by refusing to vote appropriations or expenditures for Civil Defense. In a BBC televised symposium on the H-bomb, Representative Sterling Cole claimed that the tests had evoked scarcely a ripple in the United States. If he was right, it is a sad commentary on the American Left's inability to take hold of a most simple and straightforward issue, which can be presented in plain language free from the impedimenta of jargon which have so encumbered socialist agitation in the past. The fact that Russia is advocating the banning of the H-bomb may at first sight appear to

* The criticism is justified but we hope at least partly met by "The H-bomb Terror in Japan," by Tokue Shibata, beginning on p. 72 above.

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be an insuperable handicap in propaganda to Americans. But after all, Russians are no different from Americans in their desire for non-extinction.

The epidemic of hysteria in the United States undoubtedly makes the presentation of home truths inordinately difficult. It requires courage of a very high order to be an active socialist in America today, and it ill behooves anyone writing from abroad to do anything but express the profoundest admiration for the heroism and loyalty of American socialists. But it is nonetheless a duty to point out that they have a powerful ally and reservoir of moral support in the world progressive movement, a support which in the last analysis is going to make a vital difference to internal developments within the United States.

"IT LOOKS LIKE YOU'LL HAVE TO TAKE A DAY OFF AND GO TO THE WHITE HOUSE, MR. PRESIDENT..."

The American economy and society do not exist in a vacuum. The whole world is moving towards socialism, albeit at an uneven pace, and while America may be the last country to adopt socialism in practice—though this is by no means certain—the world trend must react dialectically on America. On the one hand, it terrifies the American ruling class and drives it towards blind reaction both at home and abroad. On the other, sooner or later it *must* strengthen

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the indigenous socialist forces. So far, we have all perhaps been dazed and stunned by the first development, the negation, and have failed to appreciate the inevitability of the negation of the negation. The Chinese call the American ruling class a paper tiger, which unfortunately is an oversimplification: a paper tiger has only paper claws. But there is a kernel of truth in this description. American capitalism is nowhere near as strong as it looks or as it sometimes imagines itself to be—until it receives a severe jolt such as it recently experienced on Indo-China.

American socialists owe it both to themselves and to the world progressive movement never to lose sight of the negation of the negation. Without this awareness, the maintenance of their internal morale, which is a prime prerequisite at this time, would indeed be hazardous. Not the least of MR's services has been its contribution to the defense of the morale of American radicals. It has helped to keep alive the spark which will yet start the prairie fire.

HERE WE GO AGAIN?

The worst is over without a, doubt.
—Secretary of Labor, James J. Davis, June 29, 1930

We know from careful study and intensive analysis of daily reports that the underlying state of the American economy is vibrant, healthy and vigorous.
—Secretary of Labor, James Mitchell, February 12, 1954

A depression like 1920-1921 *is clearly out of the question. We face a recession which will terminate in the spring.*
—Harvard Economic Society Bulletin, Nov. 30, 1929

The current inventory adjustment will remain moderate and will not precipitate a deep or persistent recession.
—The Committee for Economic Development, February 17, 1954

The penalty that people pay for not being interested in politics is to be governed by people worse than themselves.
—Plato

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WORLD EVENTS

By Scott Nearing

A War of Liberation

Indo-China (or French Indo-China as it was called in the West until quite recently) is an area of Southeast Asia bordering on China, Burma, Thailand, and Malaya. Indo-China is rich in fertile land and mineral resources. Its exports include rice, tin, tungsten, and rubber.

Indo-China has been a colony-protectorate of France for nearly a century, providing French traders and financiers with commodity and capital markets, French civil servants and military personnel with salaries and pensions paid by the Indo-Chinese. The colony has been managed by the French and for the French, with little regard for the interests or the wishes of the native population.

Japanese occupation during the war of 1939-45 gave the Indo-Chinese a measure of self-government. This experience, coupled with the drive for self-determination which has been sweeping the colonial world in recent years, led to the establishment of an independent Republic of Vietnam in 1945. Ho Chi Minh, who had led the Indo-Chinese Resistance during Japanese occupation, was elected President. His government signed a treaty with the French on March 6, 1946. Disagreements arose, and the French bombed Haiphong in November, 1946. The Indo-Chinese war has been in progress ever since.

Chief among the issues which separated the antagonists in the Indo-China war was the persistent demand of the Indo-Chinese for independence and the stubborn refusal of the French to grant it.

After spending seven billion dollars and suffering heavy officer casualties in the seven-year war, under pressure from the United States State Department and the Governments of Laos and Cambodia, Paris agreed to Indo-Chinese independence in April, 1954. At that time about 90 percent of Vietnam was controlled by the Ho government and about 10 percent by France.

From its inception, the war was a losing affair for the French. Ho, leader of the Resistance against Japan and a determined advocate of independence for Indo-China, was a popular hero. Bao Dai, a Riviera playboy, French nominee for the job of unifying and ruling over Indo-China, had neither public confidence nor support except among the pro-French minority of the population.

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Like so many of the recent independence struggles in Asia, the Indo-China war has been fought partly with guns, but chiefly with behind-the-lines argument and maneuver. Since the Indo-Chinese were demanding independence and the French were refusing to discuss the issue until the war ended, popular opinion supported Ho's liberation forces. Long before the battle of Dienbienphu made the headlines, French forces were being pushed back steadily by the advocates of independence, because the liberation movement had the backing of Indo-Chinese intellectuals and businessmen as well as workers and farmers.

Senator Johnson of Colorado discussed the Indo-China war at length (*Congressional Record,* April 26, 1954, p. 5178). "Asia is in revolution," he insisted, "revolution against colonialism." The Senator argued that the Indo-China war had been and was a war of liberation. Five years ago, said he, no one called the war Communist-led. Five months ago it was not so identified. "Even 90 days ago dispatches from Saigon consistently and discreetly called them the Communist-led Viet Minh, but never the Communists or the Communist Viet Minh. At what point and to what degree, has this war, which every record shows to have been a war for freedom and independence, a war against imperialism, at what point did it suddenly become a war of Communist aggression?"

The answer to your question is plain, Senator. The Eisenhower administration needed more arms spending to reverse the recession trend in the United States economy. The State Department needed a war in order to drive Britain and France into line behind its program for a European anti-Communist army and an anti-Communist military alliance in South Asia.

Dulles Drives for a Pacific War

United States economy prospered from 1945 to 1949 on the boom generated by the 1936-45 wars in Europe and Asia. When it began sagging in 1949, it was revived by the three-year conflict in Korea (1950-53). Again it has receded since August, 1953. The Eisenhower-Dulles answer to economic recession is a further stimulus to military spending. Since the fighting in Indo-China offered the likeliest opening, Washington decided to pay four-fifths of the 1953-54 Indo-China war costs rather than allow the French to negotiate with Ho's liberation forces. In April, 1954, the Eisenhower Administration was ready for its next step. Dulles had been shouting "Communist aggression" since January, 1954. April brought Vice-President Nixon's trial balloon—United States conscripts for Indo-China even if London and Paris withdrew.

United States participation in the Indo-China war required an

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"enemy." The pro-war elements in Washington chose Peking as its "menace." Before the Berlin Conference of Foreign Ministers, Secretary Dulles declared that "never, never" would Washington recognize the Chinese Peoples Republic. But Berlin decided, against Dulles' opposition, to call a conference on April 26, in which the Chinese Peoples Republic would participate.

Britain opposed any war of the West against Asia. France refused to internationalize the Indo-China struggle. The United States alone was insisting on a continuance and an enlargement of the war.

Vietminh military gains during April, especially at Dienbienphu, weakened the French hold on Indo-China and increased the probability that native forces would be able to drive western armies out of another strategic Asian foothold. This threat to Western interests in Asia corresponded with State Department desires to undermine and perhaps prevent the Geneva meeting scheduled for April 26, and thus avoid the frustrating experience of sitting down with representatives of the Chinese Peoples Republic.

Dulles contacted the President, sold him the idea that the loss of France's position in Indo-China might mean exclusion of the West from all southeast Asia, secured presidential support for intervention in the Indo-China war, and then took three critical steps:

(1) He increased United States military aid to the French, including an airlift of troops and supplies from Paris to Indo-China.

(2) He proposed an immediate ten-power declaration, before April 26, that the signatories would refuse to allow the Vietminh to establish an independent government and would take military action, if necessary, to "save" Southeast Asia.

(3) When this policy of an anti-Communist declaration before April 26 was rejected by London and Paris, Dulles called for a ten-power conference in Washington to be held at the same time as the Geneva Conference, for the purpose of establishing an Asian collective security organization. The ten powers suggested were United States, Britain, France, Australia, and New Zealand representing the West, and Thailand, the Philippines, Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam representing Asia.

The purpose of these moves was obvious. Mr. Dulles planned to torpedo the Geneva Conference before it got started. If that effort failed, he proposed to run his own conference on Asia, with all participants from behind the Iron Curtain excluded.

Before leaving Washington on April 10, to force London and Paris into line behind his proposal for an anti-Communist declaration

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before April 26, Secretary Dulles issued a prepared statement which contained this paragraph: "Already the Government of Thailand, one of the United Nations members, which has sent troops to fight with the United Nations in Korea, told me yesterday that their government was entirely in agreement with our views and that they would join with us in creating this united front to save Southeast Asia."

The implications of this paragraph are clear. Thailand, which had joined the United States and fought a war to save Korea from Communism, was ready to do it again in Indo-China. Mr. Dulles also suggested by inference that Thailand was the first of several states that were prepared to join Washington in a crusade to wipe out Asian Communists and Communism. During the four weeks that have passed since April 10, not a single country has thrown in its lot with the United States and Thailand.

Saving Asia from the Asians

Secretary Dulles either misunderstood the situation in Indo-China or else he deliberately misrepresented it to the American people. He stated that "Communist aggression" was the moving force in Indo-China, whereas the struggle for independence from imperial rule seems to be the dominant element. The Indo-Chinese are choosing between anti-imperialism and anti-Communism. To date they are stressing anti-imperialism and are using help from the Communists in their efforts to drive out the French.

Mr. Dulles talked as though the important factor in Indo-China was a military decision, which could be secured with money, arms, and men from the United States. But at the present moment, the French-Bao Dai forces have superiority in planes, tanks, napalm, and other mechanized equipment and manpower. They are losing the war, not because they lack arms, but because the villages and towns of Vietnam and Laos are going over, one by one, to the Vietminh, in preference to continuing under the unsatisfactory rule of France.

Indo-China today resembles China in the 1945-48 period. During those years the Nationalists under Chiang were superior in United States-supplied arms and in manpower; but the villages, towns, and cities deserted the Nationalists and lined up with the liberation forces. Indo-Chinese are currently shifting their loyalties from the French-American-backed Bao Dai regime to the liberators under Ho.

This statement of fact is accepted by such ultra-conservative sources as the *Christian Science Monitor* (April 14, 1954, front page article by Gordon Walker) and the *Wall Street Journal*. It is the realization of these facts which led the *Wall Street Journal*, in a long editorial on April 19, to write: "What position will we be in if the French won't fight and the Indo-Chinese themselves won't fight in

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their own land . . .? Are we to set ourselves up alone to save Asia from the Asians?"

This question of the *Wall Street Journal* editors becomes wholly relevant when we remember the Dulles formula for "saving" Southeast Asia: the United States, Britain, France, Australia, and New Zealand (three of the five from the British Commonwealth) representing the West, while "Asia" is represented by Vietnam (largely under liberation control), Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, and the Philippines (with Laos, Cambodia, and probably the Philippines standing for independence). The situation would be ridiculous were it not so serious—the imperialists, with a tiny bodyguard of Asian puppets, using United States money and arms to save Asia from the Asians.

West Meets East in Geneva

If hydrogen bomb power politics has a comic side, Geneva helped provide it. There were delegates from Russia, China, and North Korea, with rumors flying about that Ho's emissaries were hiding somewhere behind the furniture. Also there were representatives from the United States, Britain, and France. At Geneva, the Big Two of the East met the Big One of the West. And it was the Big One that was afraid.

Eagled-eyed correspondents noted that Dulles did not greet Chou, did not meet him, did not even look at him. When Chou entered the lobby, Dulles left.

What frightened Dulles? Obviously not Chou. The press was unanimous in describing him as mild and suave, with impeccable diplomatic manners. Dulles was afraid of the witch-hunters at home! He had declared that Washington would never recognize Peking. Yet here was the United States Secretary of State in the same building with Russian "Communists," Chinese "Communists," North Korean "Communists," and perhaps even with Indo-Chinese "Communists." Dulles was in Geneva against his will, still he was there, associating!

Upon his return to Washington, some witch hunter might ask Dulles: "Mr. Secretary, the press has reported that during your recent visit to Europe you were seen in the company of international Communist conspirators. Did you smile, speak, or even look at them?" The Secretary has been up against the are-you-or-have-you-ever-been boys before, and he has no desire to stand up to their scorpion tongues again.

United States delegates, in pre-conference press interviews, had predicted obstruction from the Left, but there was none. Within twenty minutes after the delegates were called to order, agreement had been reached regarding the chairmanship and the mode of procedure. The Communists were cooperating.

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Korean unity was the first order of business. North Korean delegates proposed the withdrawal of all foreign troops and a Korea-wide election, jointly supervised by representatives of the North and South Korean Governments. South Korea proposed an election in North Korea only, for the purpose of filling a number of seats left vacant in the South Korea Legislature.

The South Korean proposal was so raw, that after a week of debate, only five of the fifteen nations with armed forces in Korea, in attendance at the Geneva Conference, had taken part in the discussion. The United States backed South Korea. Australia's endorsement was "severely qualified." Turkey did not mention the South Korean proposal, but opposed that of North Korea. Colombia and Thailand merely endorsed the resolution of the United Nations General Assembly on Korean unification. Ten of the 15 remained silent.

Thomas J. Hamilton wrote in the *New York Times* on May 2, 1954: "The failure of ten of the fifteen to make even the briefest declaration last week disturbed the United States delegation, which has been trying to get delegates to line up solidly behind the South Korean proposal." Hamilton also reported that, under pressure, British and other delegates had agreed to speak during the following week.

Experience at Geneva parallels that at San Francisco, when the Japanese Peace Treaty was adopted in 1951. Secretary Dulles had written a treaty which would give Washington all it wanted, and jammed it through the San Francisco gathering at which not one important Asian nation was represented. In legal parlance, "he won his case." In Geneva, he allowed his legal experience to take precedence again over his limited experience with power politics. In law courts, questions of justice are seldom raised. In international conferences, attended by spokesmen for colonial and semi-colonial peoples, the justice of a proposed action is certain to be argued—to the discomfiture of Dulles and his State Department associates. Lawyers win law cases, and there the matter ends. Diplomats, to succeed, must outwit their opponents, convince their allies, and at the same time persuade public opinion. Dulles the lawyer will travel a long way before he becomes Dulles the diplomat.

Agonizing Reappraisal

Secretary Dulles, who had done his utmost to prevent, belittle, and wreck the Geneva Conference, left it on May 3, one week after it got under way, and before the discussion on Indo-China had even begun. His colleagues in the United States delegation conceded that the Asian Alliance must be postponed—at the very least for months.

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He left without having spoken a word to Chou En-lai, although both attended five public meetings. He left amid a rising tide of East-West trade against which he had fought bitterly. He left while Churchill was demanding "links" with the Soviet Union, while Bevan was denouncing the United States as a menace to peace, and while Harold Wilson was telling an English audience that "the road to peace in Asia is the road of Nehru and not the road of Dulles." Dulles also left Geneva with Malenkov's May 1 warning ringing in his ears: Any future atomic war will lead to the ruin of the capitalist social system. Evidently the time had come for an agonizing reappraisal.

Another Subversive

Arnold J. Toynbee's *The World and the West* (1953) contains six stimulating and provocative chapters: Russia and the West, Islam and the West, India and the West, The Far East and the West, The Psychology of Encounters, and The World and the Greeks and Romans. The book, which is well-written and easy reading, gives the West its place in historical perspective. It is not a distinguished place. In many ways it is ignominious and downright disreputable.

Any subject of the government of the United States who will spend three hours with this book will be surprised that the United States Post Office admits it to the mails. Almost any state university with which I am acquainted would be afraid to hire a man who would write such a book, and I have no doubt but that if Professor Toynbee held an academic job in the United States, one of the Congressional committees on "subversion" would subpoena him and ask him its stereotyped questions. Could an enlightened author and an intelligent reader hope for higher commendation?

Without free speech free thought can hardly exist. Without free speech you cannot gather the fruits of the mind's spontaneous workings. When a man talks with absolute sincerity and freedom he goes on a voyage of discovery. The whole company has shares in the enterprise.

—John Jay Chapman, *Causes and Consequences*

THE TEST

"The boys already tried American chewing gum—and they like it," Mr. Georgescu said, "They'll make good Americans."

—*New York Times,* April 13, 1954

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(*continued from inside front cover*)

can afford. Prices are: single copy—25c; six copies—$1; forty copies—$5.

We strongly recommend to MR readers a film and a book. The film, "Salt of the Earth," is the best labor picture ever made in the United States. Ask your movie theaters to book it, and when it comes to your town be sure to see it. The book, Barrie Stavis' *The Man Who Never Died,* contains much hitherto unpublished material on Joe Hill and his times as well as a full-length play based on Joe Hill's life and death. The book sells for $3.00. If you can't get it at your local bookstore, forward the money to us and we'll send you the book.

The book ads are plugging "summer reading"—presumably easier going than winter reading. We do not ourselves make the distinction, but if you are one of those who do you might like to know which MR Press books are best suited for the weekend handbag. Our nominations are I. F. Stone's *The Truman Era,* a decade of the best writing by one of America's great journalists; and Ray Ginger's *The Bending Cross,* full-length biography of America's greatest socialist figure. Prices and combination subscription offers on page 96.

Have you asked your local library for these and other books sold by MR Press? Frequently such a request is all that is needed to ensure the purchase. Please help your library—and MR—by asking.

Harvey O'Connor, one of our favorite correspondents, writes us the following interesting letter:

> Officers of a large union in the Los Angeles area told me that they estimated that 20 to 50% of their members were infected with the McCarthy virus. They admitted that the local union had no program to counteract the disease. Is either the AFL or the CIO doing anything in a planned way to deal with this problem among the rank and file? More to the point, is the rank and file initiating any action or asking that any be planned?
>
> I believe that if we concede the invasion of McCarthyism within the ranks of labor, we will be in a better position to consider what to do about it. For one thing, not much has been done along a simple and obvious line: an effective pamphlet job scrutinizing McCarthy's voting record in line with AFL-CIO rollcall lists. This would be a modest beginning in the fight on McCarthyism within labor's ranks.

We agree. In one of the speeches at MR's birthday party on May 20, the point was made that McCarthy almost always votes wrong on every issue affecting the welfare of the common man: e.g., he voted *for* the Taft-Hartley law; *for* giving tideland oil to the oil interests; *against* effective rent controls; *against* low-cost public housing for veterans; *against* Federal aid to education.

Note on the New Hampshire witch hunt (which still has one of MR's editors under subpoena): the state Supreme Court recently unanimously upheld the constitutionality of the enabling repressive legislation. Among other things, the Court took issue with the decision of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court in the Steve Nelson case that the federal government, through the Smith Act, has established a virtual monopoly over the right to hunt witches.

In conclusion, let us call your attention again to the new offer of a six-month trial sub for $1 (see back cover for details). This is, of course, limited to *new* subscribers. Some readers have really pitched in on this, but far too many have not. We appeal to you all to help to the best of your ability, and to do it now rather than later.

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